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## JINGOES AND SILVERITES.

BY EDWARD ATKINSON.

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ONE of the most subtle, and, since there is no other word so expressive, most damnable arguments which have been presented in support of the free coinage of silver by this country without regard to the action of other countries, is that it is for our interest and profit to take action on every point in reverse to the acts of Great Britain. This proposal has been carried so far by some of the attorneys of the owners of silver mines as to lead them to advocate a war with Great Britain as a means of profit and benefit to the United States. The danger in this view of the matter is that it may find a ready response in a large class of legislators who regard all imports from foreign countries as of the nature of a war upon our domestic industry. Witness the fact that in the effort to promote partisan legislation and to seek favor with the so-called silver party, the junior Senator of the State of Massachusetts has proposed a policy on behalf of the so-called silver interests in our dealings with Great Britain even more grossly ridiculous than the conception which the attorneys of the silver miners have presented.

His proposal was to attempt to force Great Britain to adopt a bimetallic treaty of legal tender by putting differential duties in this country upon the products of Great Britain. These facts distinctly prove that there is no argument so gross in its nature that it may not be employed by men of public station, otherwise of good repute, in their effort to compass party success. It is a sad commentary upon human nature, giving an example of the depravity of mind which may be brought upon a man who sinks the principles of a statesman in order to compass the success of a partisan.

The Jingo element can only become dangerous through the

negligence of the mass of thinking men. That men are negligent is witnessed by the fact that those who would promote war with Great Britain do not immediately become disgraced as they might rightly be.

There is another bad feature in the existing state of opinion. A great deal of money has lately been expended at the public cost in the construction of a new navy. We surely needed a certain type of war vessels to which no exception could be taken in the present state of the world. We required armed cruisers which could be speedily sent to dangerous points for the protection of our citizens in foreign lands and for the protection of our commerce. We may have been justified in constructing one or two so-called battle ships without waiting for their worthlessness to be disclosed ; but we cannot be justified in having constructed two very costly vessels of war which are known in the navy and generally among the people as "Commerce Destroyers." That name is a disgrace to the ship, to officers of the navy and to the nation. These two ships of war cost about seven million dollars or a little more. That sum is nearly as great as the endowment of our oldest University, Harvard. The annual cost of maintaining these vessels in service is nearly, if not quite, equal to the pay roll of Harvard University. The time was when it was considered justifiable for any army to sack a city and for the officers and soldiers of an army to enrich themselves from the plunder of the private houses and other property of a conquered country. That time has long since passed. The sacking of cities is a disgrace. Private plunder is treated as robbery. An officer joining therein ceases to be a gentleman, and is regarded as a thief. Yet what would disgrace an army and its officers upon the land may be imposed upon the navy and its officers as a duty. It is now held to be among their lawful functions to do the work of pirates in ships of war built at the public cost, bearing the degrading name of "Commerce Destroyers." The nation was even represented at the recent opening of the peaceful canal at Kiel by one of these vilely named armed vessels.

What could have been more grotesque than the display of war vessels at the opening of the ship canal at Kiel—one hundred great armed vessels of different types more or less worthless in the face of the latest type of gun and shell, accompanied by twenty-five smaller vessels, sent thither from various states and

nations, at a very heavy cost, to celebrate the opening of a canal whose purpose is to carry cotton, fibres and metals to the people of Germany, in the conversion of which into finished goods for export they may be enabled to sustain the increasing burden of armies and navies. The cost of the canal was about forty million dollars. The waste upon these big and mainly worthless war ships must have represented an expenditure of not less than two hundred million dollars.

The display of these engines of destruction was mostly made by the nations of continental Europe, which nations or states maintain, within an area of European territory about corresponding to that of the United States, omitting Alaska, barriers to mutual service at the borders of separation, at which a revenue is collected by taxes upon imports, supplemented in some cases by bounties upon exports, not quite equal to the cost of sustaining the armies which, except for these barriers to mutual service, would have no reason for their existence. In this way the inherited prejudice of race and creed is maintained while the people are kept in a condition of poverty which, in respect to many of these states, is year by year becoming more hopeless.

Contrast these conditions with our relations with the neighboring Dominion of Canada. It is true that in 1866, I believe, we abandoned the treaty of reciprocity under which for many years the people of both sections of this continent had greatly thriven, and that we are now striving to recover the advantage which we might have enjoyed throughout the intervening period by making another treaty. We exchange some of the products of our agriculture with Canada, and, owing to our more southern position and greater sunshine, we are enabled to supply her with the products of our fields in rather larger measure than she can supply us. There is no antagonism between us, and throughout the long civil war not a ship was needed to watch the harbors of Canada lest an attack should be made from them upon us, and not a regiment was called for to guard our long northern frontier. On that frontier there also exists a canal, far greater in its service than the canal at Kiel can ever be. The tonnage which passes yearly through the St. Mary's Canal, which unites our great lakes, exceeds that of the Suez Canal. Yet not a fort is required to guard that canal, and not a ship of war is permitted upon either of the great lakes.

The true Monroe doctrine, so different from that which the Jingo element among our politicians so grossly misrepresents, has been applied to these lakes since 1818. After the last war with Great Britain the United States possessed the complete naval control of the lakes. The armed vessels of Great Britain had either been destroyed or were laid up almost worthless in the harbors of Canada. In 1817 John Quincy Adams, Minister to Great Britain, proposed to the English Government that neither should thereafter maintain any armed naval force upon the lakes. This course was advocated in order to "avoid the danger of collision and to save expense." The subject was duly considered for nearly a year in Washington and in London. John Quincy Adams returned to America and became Secretary of State. In 1818 President Monroe stated to the Senate that an agreement had been made permitting four revenue cutters on each side, each with one gun, upon these great inland waters. Aside from that, no armed ship was to be permitted. He asked the Senate to express its judgment upon this agreement which had not even taken the dignity of a formal treaty, and when the assent of the Senate had been given he issued the proclamation certified by John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, under which peace has been maintained, collision has been avoided, and an enormous expense has been saved both by this country and by Canada. Yet it is even now considered reputable for the United States to construct "Commerce Destroyers" to exercise their piratical functions under the flag of the Union upon the open seas!

It is time for the farmers of the Western and of the Middle States remote from the ocean to give thought to these conditions. It is time that the English speaking people entered into a commercial treaty exempting private property from seizure upon the sea, with such assent from other nations as might be had. When the English speaking people unite their forces for the protection of commerce by declaring that the destruction of private property at sea by the war vessels of any nation should be held as piracy, the moral support of the world would be given to such an agreement, and no nation, however under the control of a military caste, would dare refuse assent to such an agreement.

We, therefore, have the whole moral and economic force of the community on the one side and the Jingo element on the other—the one comprising the great body of thinking people,

slow to observe, slow to make up its mind and slow to act; the other noisy, unprincipled and aggressive, taking advantage of every petty prejudice to excite animosity and to betray the peace of the country. If there be no higher motive required to arrest political depravity, let the economic side of the question only be regarded. By what nations is the commerce mainly conducted which it would be the function of our "Commerce Destroyers" to work their evil upon in case of war? Almost wholly by England and Germany, our two largest customers for the excess of our products of the field and of the farm; also by the Scandinavian nations and the Netherlands, who are the middle men among nations, bearing our products across the seas and bringing back from the tropical and semi-tropical countries the products that we need.

What would be the effect of war with either England or Germany, coupled with the destruction of their commerce? The surplus product of Western farms and Southern plantations might rot upon the field. The proportion of grain exported, or of dairy products and meats, is not as large as the proportions of our cotton export, yet if shut in and thrown upon the market already fully supplied, it would depress all prices to the loss and damage of every farmer in the land; while on the other hand, cutting off the supply of foreign fabrics would for the time being give such a monopoly to domestic manufactures as to increase the cost of everything that the farmer buys. It is perfectly logical for the advocates of a prohibitory tariff to take the position long since taken by Henry C. Carey, who said that "he would regard a ten years' war with England as the greatest material benefit that could happen to this country." People are wiser now than they were when they listened to such a false prophet, and yet there are to-day a sufficient number of ignorant persons to whom a similar appeal is made.

Again: The attorneys of the silver miners and their coadjutors urge the adoption of the silver standard and the demonetization of gold on the ground that it is for our interest to take the reverse of the policy of Great Britain, where the gold standard has been maintained for two generations and where it will be maintained. The audacity of this proposition is only equalled by its absurdity. A very large part of the foreign exports of Great Britain and Germany are to the silver-using nations of Asia, Africa and South America. The exporters of Great Britain have,

in fact, been exposed to a good deal of hardship and difficulty in adjusting the terms of exchange with their principal customers. What could be a greater relief to Great Britain than for the United States to sell her the cotton, the corn, the dairy products and presently the coal and the ores which she must have for conversion into finished fabrics, giving her the opportunity to convert them into these finished goods and then to sell them to the silver-using nations on silver payments? Once give Great Britain the opportunity to put that silver upon us under a treaty of bimetallie legal tender by which we should deprive ourselves of any choice as between silver and gold, and we should at once relieve British manufacturers and bankers of all the difficulties which have grown out of the change of the ratio of silver to gold, taking all these difficulties upon ourselves. If any argument could be invented giving greater evidence both of audacity and imbecility I have yet to find it. The destruction of a fool is his own folly, and when the advocates of silver monometallism, at the ratio of sixteen to one, venture into this last ditch in their effort to stay the rising tide in support of sound money, they disclose both their audacity and their imbecility.

Again: The unscrupulous Jingo element of the opposition to President Cleveland have attempted to create a prejudice against his administration of the Hawaiian question by alleging that England is waiting to seize these islands. It is utterly false. No nation seeks the responsibility for taking these islands, subject to the enormous expense of arming and defending them both upon the land and upon the sea. What is needed again in this case is an agreement among the great naval powers "to avoid collision and to save expense" by neutralizing the islands and the waters adjacent thereto, giving all equal opportunity to land cables, to conduct their trade and to keep their stores of coal wherever they choose, while protecting the people of the islands in their rights.

We may regard the parcelling out of barbarous or semi-barbarous continents like Africa among the powers of Europe with perfect equanimity, and yet we may regard it as being to our great interest whenever or wherever the power and protection of the English speaking people is extended over barbarous countries. Wherever Germany and France gain a hold their effort is to keep the sole control of commerce, and so it has been with the Dutch in the Philippine Islands. Wherever England establishes her control or

protectorate it is to the benefit of the masses of the people of that land, even though they resist the somewhat rough and tactless methods by which they themselves are benefited. The French may have tact; but they use that tact for private gain and plunder. The Englishman may lack in tact; but, in these latter days, he uses his power to establish justice in the administration of semi-civilized countries. Witness the fact that the Egyptians are no longer spoiled. For the first time in history, the fellahs in Egypt are beginning to enjoy the fruits of their own industry. Wherever England exerts her control the purchasing power of the people is increased, a demand for goods made by machinery begins, and England attempts to make no discrimination, but gives to all an equal chance to supply these wants. Contrast her policy with that of the Spaniards. Contrast the condition of her colonies with the condition of those which were under the control of Spain and Portugal. Witness the present conditions of South America as compared to any English colonies or settlements. What a boon it would be to the world if systems corresponding to English law, English administration and the English regard for personal rights, could be extended over the continent of South America.

A paramount position in that international commerce through which men and nations benefit and profit each other by serving each other's needs is passing to this country. The people of the United States constitute the only nation among the machine-using nations of the world who possess within their own limits the power of producing food, fuel, iron, steel, copper, timber and innumerable fabrics far in excess of their own wants. They are subjected to the lightest burden of national taxation as compared to any and every other machine-using nation. Holding these advantages, their products are made at the highest rates of wages in every branch of industry, except mere handicrafts, as compared to those of any other country, and yet at the lowest cost of production measured by the unit of product. There has never been a period in this country when economic questions were being so exhaustively studied by great numbers of people. Let them but turn their attention to the facts which I have given in this paper and the Jingo among our politicians will be stamped out of political existence in company with the advocates of the debasement of our unit of value.

EDWARD ATKINSON.